



MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2018

Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

- March was beset by bad weather. We dealt with below 28 degree fishing closures as well as a week-long pre-emptive coastal flooding closure called by Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries. Wellfleet was not affected by flooding, however, we had to uphold the closure. Two commercial and two recreational harvesters were made to dump catch and leave flats during this closure. The long winter with many closures is taking its toll on commercial harvesters.
- Herring River opened on March 21 with close to 30 fishermen harvesting their limits of oysters and some quahogs, too, for much of the first ten days. The area continued to be very busy with 10-20 fishermen/day harvesting their limits. Reports from fishermen are that the area looks very good, and the department should continue its cultching and propagation there. We will work with the National Park Service to continue these efforts.
- Commercial shellfishing is still active in other areas of the harbor as well, with most effort concentrated at Duck Creek and Chipman's Cove, but all areas have shellfishing taking place.
- Recreational shellfishing is still slow, although we sold more than 60 permits, bringing 2018 total to date to 243 year-round permits.
- With the time change came longer days, which meant double tide patrols began again.
- The bay scallop season closed on March 31. More than 20,000 pounds of bay scallops were landed in Wellfleet during the Oct. 1-Mar. 31 season, representing more than \$36,000 to local fishermen.

Enforcement

- All except two annual grant reports were turned in by the Feb. 28 deadline. The remaining two came in on March 2.
- Spot seed checks continued with wild commercial harvesters. We also conducted random limit checks on a variety of shellfishermen who were using containers from bags to totes to baskets. All but one were spot-on the bushel limit as measured in our bushel basket.
- One confiscation with a written warning for three infractions was issued.
- One ticket was issued for fishing below 28 degrees accompanied by a three-day suspension as it was the fourth infraction within a week.
- One incident report was filed about culling at a closed area landing instead of on the tidal flats where the oysters were harvested.
- One written warning for being overlimit was issued.
- Verbal education with harvesters continued about culling and tagging product before it leaves the flats, not sharing catch with other permit holders and going direct from flats to market.
- A complaint was made by a grant lease holder about a boat fishing on grant. Grant holder identified person, spoke with him and issue is resolved. Grant holder will mark edge better.
- Two recreational harvesters were stopped for fishing without a license. Product was returned.

State and Town Relations

- Shellfish Constable Nancy Civetta reviewed all twelve grant renewals for 2018 to make sure permits were up-to-date and minimum productivity was being met. She worked with five of them to develop three-year plans for productivity where it was lacking, and as a result, one group decided to turn the grant back over to the town.

- We continue to clean up aquaculture gear strewn about the harbor.
- Constable and Assistant Shellfish Constable John Mankevetch attended the Mass. Shellfish Officers Assn. annual meeting in New Bedford. Constable also attended an aquaculture siting tool workshop and received a training certificate.
- The Board of Selectmen approved eleven grant renewals and did not renew the grant that was given back by lease holders. A grant application process will begin.
- Constable went on a site visit with Conservation Dept. and contractor for a beach replenishment project on Indian Neck.
- Constable attended two town-sponsored trainings on performance reviews and stress.
- Constable conducted and finished performance reviews for both staff.
- Constable and Asst. Constable met with TA and BOS Chair Dennis Murphy to discuss potential of turning old shellfish shack into an upweller.

Propagation

- We solicited written quotes from three quahog and oyster seed vendors and placed our seed order with Aquacultural Research Corp. in Dennis.
- We researched price lists for aquaculture gear from six potential vendors.

Education & Outreach

- On March 5, we held a two-part workshop for all Wellfleet shellfish grant holders and employees, commercial and recreational fishermen and others involved in the shellfishing industry. Part One provided an overview of monitoring and adaptive management measures by the Herring River Restoration Project to track restoration benefits to coastal resources, including shellfish. Part Two was a continuation of the town-wide “Local Comprehensive Plan” effort to develop the Town’s goals, objectives and action items regarding shellfishing, which will get its own chapter for the first time. More than 30 people attended.
- One Shellfish Crier, one event invite and two closure updates were distributed.
- Constable brought writer of *Edible Cape Cod* on patrol with her and did an interview for a piece on female constables on Cape Cod, which will be published in spring issue.
- On Sat. evening, March 31, the Constable was a panelist as part of Audubon’s Sea Change film series. The films were about the nexus of shore birds and fishing businesses, and she represented the voices of shellfishermen.

Respectfully submitted,
 Nancy Civetta
 Shellfish Constable